

launch pad 34  
*for grissom, white, and chaffee*

inside  
the men were curled like unborn children  
on the hatch, handprints in the ash  
cave paintings

we cut those frail bodies from the failure of the craft  
nylon straps melted hard as our saws

whoever invented that material should be at their funeral  
swallowing his tears  
artificial lilies shaking in his hand

we should all be there  
the janitors, engineers  
the finance staff passing  
a lit receipt from candle to candle

and the machines  
the gyroscopes  
computers  
all shuffling closer to those three narrow boxes  
dragging their power cords behind them  
like lamed legs